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TAGS: PREL PTER IS KU
SUBJECT: MFA UNDERSECRETARY DESCRIBES VISIT OF HAMAS LEADER

Classified By: Ambassador Richard LeBaron for reasons 1.4(b) and (d)

¶1. (C) Ministry of Foreign Affairs Undersecretary Khaled Al-Jarallah provided the Ambassador with a brief read-out of the March 24-26 visit to Kuwait of the Hamas delegation led by Khalid Mishaal. Al-Jarallah reported that nothing really important came out of the meetings with the Amir, Prime Minister Shaykh Nasser Mohammed Al-Sabah, and Speaker of the Parliament Jassem Al-Khorafi. The GOK emphasized that Hamas needs to "deal with the needs of the international community," and respect UN resolutions and Arab initiatives (read: the CP Aballah proposal at the Beirut Summit) regarding the peace process. Jarallah claimed the GOK leaders were very clear in telling Mishaal that for the sake of the Palestinian people, Hamas needed to be realistic, otherwise Hamas would be isolated.

¶2. (C) Jarallah said the GOK did not commit to any new financial support at this time, deferring to decisions to be taken at the Arab League (AL) summit in Khartoum, but also telling Hamas that Kuwait would wait and watch what they were going to do.

¶3. (C) According to Jarallah, Hamas had asked for the meetings four weeks ago, but the GOK delayed the visit until after the formation of the new PA Government. The GOK asked Mishaal to limit his activities and not to visit any diwaniyas. His activities were limited to a few official meetings, a media event at the airport, and a dinner hosted by Abdullah Ali Al-Mutawa. The GOK did not give approval for an event that was to have been hosted by Mubarak Al-Duweileh, an Islamist former member of Parliament.

¶4. (C) Al-Jarallah reported that Mishaal was not as categorical about familiar Hamas positions in his private meetings as he was in his public comments to the press at the airport. The GOK detected some flexibility (NFI). Commenting on possible outcomes of the Khartoum summit, Al-Jarallah said it was not sure whether there would be new commitments.

¶5. (U) During an airport press conference prior to his departure, Mishaal asked Arab countries to provide \$170 million per month to the PA for salaries and other expenses, almost three times what the AL pledged in 2005 at the Algeria summit and complained that Hamas was being excluded from the Khartoum summit. He said Hamas would "take into consideration" comments by the Amir on the need for Palestinian unity and to "deal realistically" with the challenges before it, but restated demands for Israeli recognition of "Palestinian rights."

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